



photo by Edwin Folven

Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Congressman Henry Waxman and State Assemblymember Mike Feuer show solidarity.

state and federal levels," Feuer added. "On transportation, [Congressman Waxman] has been very instrumental in effectuating Measure R. Whenever there is a significant issue where the federal government can play a meaningful role, Congressman Waxman is always there to make sure it happens."

Waxman said another accomplishment he is very proud of is the reduction in air pollution in Los Angeles.

"Air pollution issues have always been very important to me," Waxman said.

"Henry is our 'go to guy' whenever there is a problem. On community issues, such as transportation and especially healthcare issues, he has been a real partner with me and the County of Los Angeles."

Zev Yaroslavsky

Los Angeles County Supervisor

Los Tres Moustachios

The three political musketeers join forces to govern the county, country and state

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Over the last three decades, Congressman Henry Waxman, Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky and State Assemblymember Mike Feuer have come to symbolize the face of leadership in the local area.

The three legislators have been friends for years and share many commonalities, including their Jewish heritage and the fact that they are all longtime residents of the community. While Feuer attended Harvard, both Yaroslavsky and Waxman are graduates of the University of California, Los Angeles. In addition, they are instantly recognizable for their distinctive mustaches.

When they get together, the conversation turns to past trips to Israel and a common love of classical music — all three are big fans of the L.A. Philharmonic. As longtime residents, they reminisce about places like Canter's Deli and other businesses that have been located on Fairfax Avenue for decades. All three also share a strong desire to improve life for their constituents, which is why they became public servants. The fact that they have a close working relationship has directly benefitted the people who live and work here, and a look at some of their accomplishments shows their passion and the impact they have had on the community.

Waxman, who represents the 30th Congressional District, splits most of his time between Los Angeles and Washington D.C. Waxman has served in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1974, and has championed many causes at the national level, including healthcare reform, environmental protection, tobacco regulation, and assistance for people with HIV and AIDS.

He said transportation, air pollution and universal access to healthcare are among the most important issues facing people today, and added that he is extremely proud of his accomplishments in those areas. Waxman works closely with Feuer and Yaroslavsky on many issues, and said that cohesiveness enables many things to be accomplished.

One of the main priorities for the legislators is the Westside Subway Extension, which, when completed, will run underneath Wilshire Boulevard to Santa Monica. They agree that the subway will be one of the most significant developments affecting people for decades to come.

In the 1980s, Waxman said he supported the original subway line that now ends at Western Avenue, but did not initially support a subway running farther west underneath Wilshire Boulevard following a methane gas explosion in the Fairfax District in 1983.

"I have always supported public transportation and mass transit to meet the requirement that people drive wherever they want to go," Waxman said. "In the mid-1980s, I supported a plan by then-mayor Tom Bradley, but became concerned about safety in the area around Park La Brea because of heavy methane gas concentrations. That concern has been allayed by an independent commission, and we made sure the federal law would allow the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to design their plan."

Yaroslavsky, who is a staunch supporter of the subway, passionately campaigned for Measure R, the half-cent countywide sales tax that is generating money for transportation projects such as the subway. At the state level, Feuer built coalitions and authored legislation that allowed Measure

R to be placed on the ballot in 2008. Together, the legislators cleared many of the hurdles, but many remain, such as identifying funding for the project. They are committed to doing whatever they can to ensure the subway becomes a reality. Yaroslavsky and Feuer credited Waxman for his efforts.

"Henry is our 'go to guy' whenever there is a problem," Yaroslavsky said. "On community issues, such as transportation and especially healthcare issues, he has been a real partner with me and the County of Los Angeles. He is a very influential member of Congress, people in the White House listen to him, people in the legislature listen to him, and he has been a huge resource for us on many issues."

Feuer added that the partnership that exists between the legislators is critical to getting problems solved.

"We work very closely at the county,

"From my very first time in Congress, I was on the committee dealing with the Clean Air Act, and was concerned about providing the greatest opportunity for L.A. and California to clean up the heavy pollution that we have had for some period of time. The Clean Air Act did a lot to keep the pressure on and reduce the air pollution in places like Los Angeles."

Waxman also said healthcare issues are of dire importance to Los Angeles residents. He strongly supported the Affordable Care Act, which was passed last year, and previously helped establish the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Act, which provides funding and other support for programs that help people with HIV and AIDS.

"I have been a strong advocate of healthcare, especially to prevent diseases," Waxman said. "I support the public healthcare program for seniors, and laws that ensure more people are covered. I am proud we passed the national healthcare bill, which is supposed to be fully activated by 2014. We have an opportunity to provide healthcare to millions of people who otherwise may not be covered."

Waxman said the local neighborhood's



photo by Edwin Folven/photo art by Tim Posada

vibrancy and diversity are what make it the heart of the city. He said he is encouraged by growth in the Fairfax District and along the Miracle Mile, and added that he believes the economic growth will continue into the future.

"This area is always what I considered to be my base," Waxman added. "The area has changed a lot. We now have a large Iranian-Jewish community; a large Russian-Jewish community; West Hollywood has become a center for the gay community. When I was first elected, Fairfax was heavily populated by seniors, but now it is much more diverse. It really is a dynamic place, and it is an honor to represent the area."

Yaroslavsky, who has lived in the Fairfax District since 1956 and is a graduate of Fairfax High School, said it is one of the most diverse communities anywhere. Since 1994, Yaroslavsky has represented the 3rd Supervisorial District — which stretches from the Wilshire and Fairfax areas west to the Ventura County border and north to the upper portions of the San Fernando Valley. From 1975 to 1994, he represented the area as Los Angeles City Councilmember for the 5th District.

He said some of his biggest accomplishments have included authoring legislation to protect open space in the Santa Monica Mountains and the Hollywood Hills, spearheading the renovation of the Hollywood Bowl, and providing support for institutions such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Walt Disney Concert Hall places he frequents regularly in his personal time. Yaroslavsky said he also loves the mountains and the areas around the ocean within his district, but added that he has remained in his home in the Fairfax District because everything can be found in one place.

"It is strategically located. You are twenty minutes away from downtown or the Westside, the people are wonderful, and it is a relatively modest neighborhood with diverse land-use," Yaroslavsky said. "You have Park La Brea and the Farmers Market, which has been one of my haunts since I have lived in the neighborhood. Pink's Hot Dog stand is a favorite of mine. Some of the most beautiful apartments in town are in the Fairfax area. Overall, it's just a great place to live."

Yaroslavsky said he definitely has seen the area change for the better over the years, and credited developments such as the Beverly Center and The Grove for driving that change. The area is now considered one of the most desirable places to live in the city, he added, and Yaroslavsky said he is proud to have been part of the process of change.

"I think the change has been obvious. The development of the Beverly Center brought a huge change when it was built in the late '70s after Proposition 13," Yaroslavsky said. "This neighborhood was at a crossroads. Nobody knew if there was going to be gentrification or whether it was going to get run down. The Beverly Center was a huge infusion of investment in the neighborhood and brought a huge injection of confidence in the area. It propelled the Fairfax area to what it is today, a very desirable place. The Grove is in the same vein. It's a huge project that attracts people from all over the area."

"We came back to L.A., and I found myself smack dab in the middle of the neighborhood again, which was very poignant for me."

The Farmers Market, Canter's, Diamond Bakery were all familiar stomping grounds."

Mike Feuer
State Assemblymember

Yaroslavsky added that new growth in the area can be expected within the coming years once the economy improves. He also said he wouldn't think about living anywhere else.

"If you like the city, this is as nice a place as possible," Yaroslavsky said. "We like the hustle and bustle, and I think the area has got all the up sides. As the population in Southern California increases, I think the Beverly-Fairfax area is going to become even more desirable."

Feuer, who grew up in San Bernardino but has lived in the local area since the mid-1980s, said he has been coming to the neighborhood since he was a child because his grandparents used to live near 5th Street and Crescent Heights. He said many of the local landmarks that he remembers as a kid are still here, and the neighborhood is more desirable than ever.

"We came back to L.A., and I found myself smack dab in the middle of the neighborhood again, which was very poignant for me," Feuer said. "The Farmers Market, Canter's, Diamond

Bakery were all familiar stomping grounds."

Feuer moved to the area after graduating from Harvard Law School and became director of Bet Tzedek, a non-profit organization located on Fairfax Avenue that assists senior citizens with legal issues. He said helping people who otherwise could not help themselves inspired him to seek public office. Since 2006, he has represented the 42nd State Assembly District, which includes the Melrose and Fairfax Districts, West Hollywood, Beverly Hills and Santa Monica, as well as portions of Hollywood and the San Fernando Valley. Prior to being elected to the State Assembly, he represented the area as Los Angeles City Councilmember for the 5th District from 1995 through 2001.

Feuer said some of his proudest accomplishments were...

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plishments in public office have included his work on Measure R, and legislation protecting children and senior citizens. In his youth, the neighborhood was primarily populated by members of the Jewish community, and while they remain today, Feuer said there are now many more ethnic groups that call the neighborhood home. He said one of the best examples of that can be found at Pan Pacific Park, where he often helps with his daughter's softball training.

"At Pan Pacific Park, you see people of every background in Los Angeles coming together, and everyone gets along. I have never felt any tension there, I always felt a sense of belonging that really emphasizes what we need to be as a city," Feuer said. "People of all backgrounds take their families there; their kids play in the playground together. There aren't too many neighborhoods in the world, let alone L.A., that have so much to offer."

Waxman, Feuer and Yaroslavsky said they remain highly optimistic about the future, and added that the same cohesiveness that has enabled them to solve past problems will help them address new challenges as they come up. Being represented by legislators who are both friends and allies at the local, state and national level, as well as lawmakers who have the experience of living in the area for many years, is a major benefit for the people who live, work in and visit Los Angeles.



photo by Edwin Folven

State Assemblymember Mike Feuer, Congressman Henry Waxman and Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky share a laugh.